

something else is thinkable and there were those at the great nightfall who took loving care to preserve the tokens of hope and truth.

Five years later Reagan was President promising to rekindle the American dream.

It has been said that the American dream was to own your own home. That is not the American dream. The American dream is to get your kids out of your home. And when Ronald Reagan took office, many Americans wondered if they ever could.

We had interest rates at 21 percent, inflation at 14 percent, and 11 percent unemployment.

We were also losing the cold war. Between 1970 and 1980 the Soviet Union had increased its influence in Cuba, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Nicaragua, Grenada, Mozambique, Angola, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, South Yemen, Libya, Iraq, and Syria.

On top of that one-third of our planes unable to fly for lack of spare parts, one-third of our ships in dry dock, soldiers practicing with pretend bullets, and much of our enlisted corps on food stamps.

In his first inaugural address Reagan addressed our difficulties at home and abroad. Then he appealed to the best in us. He said, "We can do this, because, after all, we are Americans." The decade of the eighties was the American decade in the American century. I know that the Clinton's, during the 1992 campaign, called it the decade of greed. Maybe they thought every American was trading in cattle futures. Most Americans were not. They were starting businesses, going to church, coaching little league, teaching school, paying taxes, and giving to charity.

In less than a decade, Americans, not government, created 4 million businesses and 20 million new jobs. They doubled the size of the economy and doubled revenues to the treasury. They doubled the money they gave to charities—to strangers—because they were generous.

And if we get the burdens of high taxes and too much regulation off their backs, they will do it again.

America is great, not because of Government policies or wise politicians. America is great because ordinary people do extraordinary things. When we return decisions to the American people and responsibilities to the communities I believe that they, not the Federal Government but they, will once again recapture the greatness we have known. If we fail, America will be the next century's Soviet Union. Not because government did too little. Because government did too much.

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#### DORNAN REPLIES TO GUNDERSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NEY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from California [Mr. DORNAN] is recog-

nized for 5 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. DORNAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from California, Mrs. SEASTRAND, who will follow with 30 minutes that I think Members are going to find fascinating.

Mr. Speaker, I had 60 minutes tonight but everybody was jumping the gun and assuming that in a special order tonight at 8:30 East Coast time or later, 9:30 after the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. KLINK, does his special order, that I was going to respond to the Member from the Third District of Wisconsin, STEVE GUNDERSON, on his peculiar point of personal privilege yesterday.

I have talked to the parliamentarians and my honor was impugned at several points during Mr. GUNDERSON's strange point of personal privilege. If I had been here, I could have taken his words down time after time and had them stricken from the RECORD. I stood not mesmerized but fascinated at home. I will at some point, as the parliamentarians agreed, take a point of special privilege during the middle of the day, probably earlier than he did his. He did his around 3:30. That will be done in good time, probably next week, and I will set straight the perversion of facts that took place.

I am going to include for the RECORD the reply of the reporter, a man of honor, Marc Morano, to Representative STEVE GUNDERSON, it is fascinating; I want to put in the reply of the Family Research Council, it is fascinating; and I am going to put in again Billy Graham's beautiful address in the Rotunda on May 2 that he titled "The Hope for America," where he said that we are paying an awful price for what has happened in our land with moral issues. And then he said, "We are a society poised on the brink of self-destruction."

In the few moments left, Mr. Speaker, I will read from a letter from one of the outstanding researchers over at Family Research Council, he was a stalwart at Empower America, and it was in response to a good friend of mine saying the Christian Coalition might be obsessed with the issue of homosexuality.

Likewise CATO's David Boaz used the term to attack the Family Research Council in the New York Times. Funny you don't hear anyone accused of being obsessed with taxes, defense of our country, deregulation, education, or any number of other issues no matter how passionately they argue or how often. The "obsession" tag is used specifically in the homosexual debate, and I think I know why, he continues.

Because it implies a secret, hypocritical propensity for homosexuality. It is a nifty little smear that homosexual activists use routinely. That is why I winced when I found the nameless mutual friend of Mr. Knight's and myself had used the term unknowingly at the Road to Victory conference.

We have seen a debauching of the English language, a synonym for cheer-

ful, happy, mirthful, good-natured, the word "gay," the root word of gala, substituted for the death in their prime of life of over 300,000 young males in America who have the word "gay" and "gaiety" put in the place of "sad" and "play."

We have seen a word created that is phony. I have four years of Latin. There is no such word as homophobia. Phobia of man, homo? If they mean homosexual phobia or decadence phobia, that would be more accurate, but it is not a phobia. It may be an aversion to seeing the collapse of our society or, as Billy Graham put it, a great Nation on the brink of self-destruction. I shall be back with that theme soon.

Mr. Speaker, Fair is fair and facts are powerful. Here is Mr. Morano's powerful rebuttal to the Member from Wisconsin who will retire in less than five months, effective Jan. 3, 1996.

#### MARC MORANO REPLIES TO REPRESENTATIVE STEVE GUNDERSON

The following is my response to Congressman Steve Gunderson's (R-WI) point of personal privilege delivered on the House floor on May 14, 1996:

It is an outrage that a U.S. Congressman would interrupt a session of Congress and take to the House floor and slander the character of a reporter whom he never met. Congressman Steve Gunderson said on the House floor that "hate and prejudice are the motives by which Mr. Morano \* \* \* sought to totally misrepresent the fund raising events and their purpose." He further states that I "intentionally falsified information" and that my report is "the journalism of bigotry and prejudice." How Congressman Gunderson knows all of this about me remains a mystery.

The Washington Times reported today that at least three other people who attended the night dance can corroborate my account. John Cloud, a city paper reporter said he witnessed "a fair number of people using drugs." A columnist in Metro Weekly described the dance as follows: "We spent much of our time out on the dance floor trying to cop a feel, or back in the sponsors lounge trying to cop a feel, or outside in the designated smoking area trying to cop a feel and a smoke." In addition, Jim Jennings, who works for one of the sponsors of the event admitted to seeing "very provocative dancing."

The freedom of the press is a fundamental right set forth in the Constitution. Congressman Steven Gunderson's character assassination of me on the House floor has a chilling effect on free speech. Will reporters in the future now hesitate to come forth with a controversial story for fear our elected leaders will use their office to attack the reporters entire career, question their motives and engage in vicious name calling? Congressman Gunderson, by impugning my professional reputation, has proven that he is not above "questioning other peoples motives" and stereotyping whom he knows nothing about. The fact of the matter is that my report is entirely factual. I ask Congressman Gunderson to publicly apologize for his unfounded assault on my character. The dignity of his position demands that a retraction be forthcoming.

The following is a detailed response to Rep. Gunderson's point of personal privilege delivered on the House floor on May 14, 1996. First, I reaffirm that the report of my observations of the Cherry Jubilee's Main Event

was totally factual and without misrepresentation. Second, Congressman Gunderson personal attack on me violates his own philosophy, which he states, "May I suggest that to begin, we stop questioning other people's motives." Third, the Congressman, who did not attend, claims to know more about the event than myself who was in attendance and personally witnessed the activities. Fourth, I was contracted to produce a video by the Family Research Council, not write a report. The report is my intellectual property not in any way commissioned by the Family Research Council.

Let us look at the allegations put forth by Congressman Gunderson in his point of personal privilege on May 14, 1996:

(1) Rep. Gunderson stated: "Throughout his [Morano's] entire story, not one source is ever identified or quoted."

The story is a personal account of what I witnessed. I was the source.

(2) Rep. Gunderson stated: "There is no record that Mr. Morano purchased tickets for any of these events. He clearly did not use his name and address at any time, nor did he seek to obtain any 'press credentials' for the events."

I did attempt to obtain "press credentials" but was told they were not issuing any. I made at least three phone calls to the organizers on the Thursday and Friday preceding the event. I was forced to purchase one ticket from someone outside the entrance and another ticket from the organizers inside the entrance. The Sunday Recovery Brunch which followed the Main Event was not open to the press. I went to the Rayburn House Office Building on Sunday to cover the event but was told no press or cameras were allowed.

(3) Rep. Gunderson claimed, "But fact is not the basis for the story. Rather hate and prejudice are the motives by which Mr. Morano . . . sought to totally misrepresent the fund raising events. . . ."

Rep. Gunderson is violating his own advice that we "stop questioning other people's motives." I reported on what I personally witnessed; to suggest otherwise is without foundation.

(4) Rep. Gunderson stated: "Nor does the video show any illegal activity . . . if there any doubt such illegal activity would have been filmed if it actually occurred? I don't think so."

I was forced to be very discreet with the video camera and did attempt to videotape the act of oral sex which occurred just off the dance floor but because of the concealment device used to hide the camera, the footage did not come out. Security eventually saw my camera and threatened to confiscate it and the tape. I was forced to hastily remove the camera from the building.

(5) Rep. Gunderson accuses me of "bigotry and prejudice" for the following sentence: "The homosexual community's credo seems to be 'Die young and leave a pretty corpse.'"

Rep. Gunderson uses this sentence taken out of context to accuse me of ignorance regarding death by AIDS. This sentence was part of an opinion piece on the event that I wrote for *Chronicles Magazine*. The whole context is as follows: "There were few if any men who could be described as overweight. In fact, the overwhelming majority had bodies sculpted from weight lifting. Beer and bottled water were the beverages of choice, while apples, bananas, and oranges were in plentiful supply. The image of young active health conscious men, drinking bottled water and consuming fruit is a study in contrast. The reckless lifestyle inherent in the gay experience results in a notably reduced life span. The life expectancy of a homosexual male is estimated to be no more than about 41 years old, regardless of AIDS. The

homosexual community's credo seems to be "Die young and leave a pretty corpse."

I did not in any way seek to imply that people who die of AIDS "die pretty" as Rep. Gunderson infers. I was using an old expression to draw a contrast between the healthy vigorous party goers and the reality of the shortened life span of homosexual males. Rep. Gunderson takes this sentence out of context in order to accuse me of "bigotry and prejudice". Congressman Gunderson exploits the tragedy of the AIDS crisis to smear my name.

(6) Rep. Gunderson claims that the outside stairwell was closed off because of "construction."

This is simply not true. The outside stairwell was open for several hours and many people proceeded down there. One party goer, noticing people down in the stairwell referred to it as "screw alley." Security closed the stairwell down several hours after the dance began. Security erected orange cones to close it off and stationed an officer right in front of the entrance.

(7) Rep. Gunderson states that "security reported no fights, no harassment, no drugs, no smoking, nor any sexual activity. Security made no reports of illegal activity or trouble."

The question that needs to be asked is why Security did not report the activities it surely witnessed. According to the *Washington Times* (May 15), John Cloud, a *City Paper* reporter who attended the dance witnessed ". . . a fair number of people using drugs." The *Washington Times* also reported (May 15) that "A columnist for the *Metro Weekly*, a Washington homosexual newspaper, described the dance: 'The stately place was incredible—we felt like we were in a hallowed hall. We spent much of our time out on the dance floor trying to cop a feel, or back in the sponsors' lounge trying to cop a feel, or outside in the designated smoking area trying to cop a feel and a smoke.'"

Mr. Speaker, here is the inspiring act of Congress awarding to Dr. Billy Graham, and his loyal wife of 52 years, Ruth, the Congressional Gold Medal.

ONE HUNDRED FOURTH CONGRESS OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AT THE SECOND SESSION

Begun and held at the City of Washington on Wednesday, the third day of January, one thousand nine hundred and ninety-six.

AN ACT TO AWARD A CONGRESSIONAL GOLD  
MEDAL TO RUTH AND BILLY GRAHAM.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

The Congress hereby finds the following:

(1) Ruth and Billy Graham have made outstanding and lasting contributions to morality, racial equality, family, philanthropy, and religion.

(2) America's most respected and admired evangelical leader for the past half century, Billy Graham's crusades have reached 100,000,000 people in person and reached over 2,000,000,000 people worldwide on television.

(3) Billy Graham, throughout his 76 years of life and his 52-year marriage to Ruth Graham, has exemplified the highest ideals of teaching, counseling, ethics, charity, faith, and family.

(4) Billy Graham's daily newspaper column and 14 books have provided spiritual counseling and personal enrichment to millions of people.

(5) Ruth and Billy Graham have been the driving force to create the Ruth and Billy Graham Children's Health Center at Memorial Mission Hospital in Asheville, North

Carolina, whose vision is to improve the health and well-being of children and to become a new resource for ending the pain and suffering of children.

#### SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate are authorized to present, on behalf of the Congress, to Billy and Ruth Graham a gold medal of appropriate design, in recognition of their outstanding and enduring contributions toward faith, morality, and charity.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury shall strike a gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions to be determined by the Secretary.

(c) GIFTS AND DONATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Treasury may accept, use, and disburse gifts or donations of property or money to carry out this section.

(2) NO APPROPRIATION AUTHORIZED.—No amount is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section.

#### SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

The Secretary of the Treasury may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 2 under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, at a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses, and the cost of the gold medal.

#### SEC. 4. STATUS OF MEDALS.

(a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck pursuant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

(b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section 5134 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

CONSTANCE A. MORELLA,  
*Speaker of the House  
of Representatives  
pro tempore.*

AL GORE,  
*Vice President of the  
United States and  
President of the Sen-  
ate.*

Approved February 13, 1996, William J. Clinton.

Mr. Speaker, here are the prepared remarks of Dr. Billy Graham.

A beautiful title, Mr. Speaker.

THE HOPE FOR AMERICA

Mr. Vice President; Speaker Newt Gingrich; Majority Leader Bob Dole; Senator Strom Thurmond; Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate; distinguished guests and friends \* \* \*

Ruth and I are overwhelmed by the very kind words that have been spoken today, and especially by the high honor you have just bestowed on both of us. It will always be one of the high points of our lives, and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for this unforgettable event. We are grateful for all of you in the Senate and House who have had a part in it; and President Clinton for his support in signing the resolution.

As we read the list of distinguished Americans who have received the Congressional Gold Medal in the past—beginning with George Washington in 1776—we know we do not belong in the same company with them, and we feel very unworthy. One reason is because we both know this honor ought to be shared with those who have helped us over the years—some of whom are here today. As a young boy, I remember gazing at that famous painting of Washington crossing the

Delaware. Only later did it occur to me that Washington did not get across that river by himself. He had the help of others—and that has been true of us as well. Our ministry has been a team effort, and without our associates and our family, we never could have accomplished anything.

I am especially grateful my wife, Ruth, and I are BOTH being given this honor. No one has sacrificed more than Ruth has, or been more dedicated to God's calling for the two of us.

However, I would not be here today receiving this honor if it were not for an event that happened to me many years ago as a teenager on the outskirts of Charlotte, NC. An evangelist came through our town for a series of meetings. I came face-to-face with the fact that God loved me, Billy Graham, and had sent His Son to die for my sin. He told how Jesus rose from the dead to give us hope of eternal life.

I never forgot a verse of Scripture that was quoted, "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12, KJV). That meant that I must respond to God's offer of mercy and forgiveness. I had to repent of my own sins and receive Jesus Christ by faith.

When the preacher asked people to surrender their lives to Christ, I responded. I had little or no emotion; I was embarrassed to stand with a number of other people when I knew some of my school peers saw me; but I meant it. And that simple repentance and open commitment to Jesus Christ changed my life. If we have accomplished anything at all in life since then, however, it has only been because of the grace and mercy of God.

As Ruth and I receive this award we know that some day we will lay it at the feet of the One we seek to serve.

As most of you know, the President has issued a proclamation for this day, May 2, 1996, to be a National Day of Prayer. Here in Washington you will see and hear of people throughout the District of Columbia praying today. It is encouraging and thrilling that here, and across the country people have committed themselves to pray today for our leaders, our nation, our world, and for ourselves as individuals. I am so glad that before business each morning, both the House of Representatives and the Senate have a prayer led by Chaplain Ogilvie of the Senate, who has had so much to do with this event today, and Chaplain Jim Ford, who used to be chaplain at West Point when I went almost every year to bring a message to the cadets.

Exactly 218 years ago today—on May 2, 1778—the first recipient of this award, George Washington, issued a General Order to the American people. He said, "The . . . instances of Providential Goodness which we have experienced and which have now almost crowned our labors with complete success demand from us . . . the warmest returns of Gratitude and Piety to the Supreme Author of all Good." It was a message of hope and trust, and it also was a challenge for the people to turn to God in repentance and faith.

We are standing at a similar point in our history as less than four years from now the world will enter the Third Millennium. What will it hold for us? Will it be a new era of unprecedented peace and prosperity? Or will it be a continuation of our descent into new depths of crime, oppression, sexual immorality, and evil?

Ironically, many people heralded the dawn of the 20th Century with optimism. The steady march of scientific and social progress, they believed would vanquish our social and economic problems. Some optimistic theologians even predicted the 20th Century would be "The Christian Century",

as humanity followed Jesus' exhortation to love your neighbor as yourself. But no other century has been ravaged by such devastating wars, genocides and tyrannies. During this century we have witnessed the outer limits of human evil.

Our mood on the brink of the 21st Century is far more somber. Terms like "ethnic cleansing" "random violence" and "suicide bombing" have become part of our daily vocabulary.

Look at our own society. There is much, of course, that is good about America, and we thank God for our heritage of freedom and our abundant blessings. America has been a nation that has shown a global compassion that the rest of the world seemingly does not understand. After World War II because we had the Atom Bomb, we had the opportunity to rule the world, but America turned form that and instead helped rebuild the countries of our enemies.

Nevertheless, something has happened since those days and there is much about America that is no longer good. You know the problems as well as I do—racial and ethnic tensions that threaten to rip apart our cities and neighborhoods; crime and violence of epidemic proportions in most of our cities; children taking weapons to school; broken families; poverty; drugs; teenage pregnancy; corruption; the list is almost endless. Would the first recipients of this award even recognize the society they sacrificed to establish? I fear not. We have confused liberty with license—and we are paying the awful price. We are a society poised on the brink of self-destruction.

But what is the real cause? We call conferences and consultations without end, frantically seeking solutions to all our problems; we engage in shuttle diplomacy; and yet in the long run little seems to change. Why is that? What is the problem? The real problem is within ourselves.

Almost three thousand years ago King David, the greatest king Israel ever had, sat under the stars and contemplated the reasons for the human dilemma. He listed three things that the world's greatest scientists and sociologists have not been able to solve, and it seems the more we know, and the greater our technology, the more difficulties we are in. In perhaps the best-known passage of the Old Testament, Psalm 23, he touches on the three greatest problems of the human race.

First, David said, is the problem of emptiness. David wrote, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." He was not talking just about physical want, but spiritual want.

I stood on the campus of one of our great universities some time ago, and I asked the Dean, "What is the greatest problem on your campus?" He replied in one word: "Emptiness." The human heart craves for meaning, and yet we live in a time of spiritual emptiness that haunts millions.

"Nirvana" is the Hindu word for someone who has arrived into the state of perpetual bliss. Media reports said that Kurt Cobain, the NIRVANA rock group's leader, was the pacesetter for the nineties, and the "savior of rock and roll." But he said the song in the end which best described his state of mind was "I hate myself and I want to die!" And at age 27 he committed suicide with a gun.

Second, is the problem of guilt. David wrote: "He restoreth my soul, he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness." Down inside we all know that we have not measured up even to our own standards, let alone God's standard.

Third, David pointed to the problem of death. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." Death is the one common reality of all human life. Secretary of

Commerce Ron Brown did not realize his time had come when he stepped on that plane in Croatia a few weeks ago.

From time to time I have wandered through Statuary Hall and looked at all those statues of some of the greatest men and women in our nation's history. But one thing is true of every one of them: They are all dead.

Yes, these three things—emptiness, guilt, and the fear of death—haunt our souls. We frantically seek to drown out their voices, driving ourselves into all sorts of activities—from sex to drugs or tranquilizers—and yet they are still there.

But we must probe deeper. Why is the human heart this way? The reason is because we are alienated from our Creator. That was the answer David found to these three problems: "The Lord is my shepherd." This is why I believe the fundamental crisis of our time is a crisis of the spirit. We have lost sight of the moral and spiritual principles on which this nation was established—principles drawn largely from the Judeo-Christian translation as found in the Bible.

What is the cure? Is there hope?

Ruth and I have devoted our lives to the deep conviction that the answer is yes. There is hope! Our lives can be changed, and our world can be changed. The Scripture says, "You must be born again." You could have a spiritual rebirth right here today.

What must be done? Let me briefly suggest three things.

First, we must repent. In the depths of the American Civil War, Abraham Lincoln called for special days of public repentance and prayer. Our need for repentance is no less today. What does repentance mean? Repentance means to change our thinking and our way of living. It means to turn from our sins and to commit ourselves to God and His will. Over 2700 years ago the Old Testament prophet Isaiah declared: "Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon" (Isaiah 55:6-7, NIV). Those words are as true as they were over two and a half millennia ago.

Second, we must commit our lives to God, and to the moral and spiritual truths that have made this nation great. Think how different our nation would be if we sought to follow the simple and yet profound injunctions of the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. But we must respond to God, Who is offering us forgiveness, mercy, supernatural help, and the power to change.

Third, our commitment must be translated into action—in our homes, in our neighborhoods, and in our society.

Jesus taught there are only two roads in life. One is the broad road that is easy and well-traveled, but which leads to destruction. The other, He said, is the narrow road of truth and faith that at times is hard and lonely, but which leads to life and salvation.

As we face a new millennium, I believe America has gone a long way down the wrong road. We must turn around and go back and change roads. If ever we needed God's help, it is now. If ever we needed spiritual renewal, it is now. And it can begin today in each one of our lives, as we repent before God and yield ourselves to Him and His Word.

What are YOU going to do?

The other day I heard the story of a high school principal who held an assembly for graduating seniors, inviting a recruiter from each branch of the service: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines to each give a twelve minute presentation on career opportunities they offered to the students. He stressed the importance of each staying within their allotted time.

The Army representative went first, and was so eloquent that he got a standing ovation, but went eighteen minutes. Not to be outdone, the Navy presentation was equally superb, but took nineteen minutes. Air Force then gave a sterling presentation, which lasted twenty minutes. By now, the principal was irate, and admonished the Marine recruiter that he had only three minutes before the students had to leave for the next class!

During the first two minutes of his shortened time, the Marine didn't say a word, but individually and carefully studied the faces of each student. Finally, he said, "I've looked across this crowd and I see three or four individuals who have what it takes to be a United States Marine. If you think you are one of them, I want to see you down front immediately after the assembly."

Who do you think drew the biggest crowd! This afternoon, as I look out across this distinguished group gathered here, I see more than a few men and women who have what it takes, under God to lead our country forward "through the night" into the next millennium—individuals who represent civil and governmental authority—as well as doctors, lawyers, clergy, artists and media.

Again, Ruth and I are deeply humbled by this award, and we thank you for all that it represents.

We pledge to continue the work that God has called us to do as long as we live.

Thank you.

#### AMERICANS NEED GAS TAX FREEDOM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from California [Mrs. SEASTRAND] is recognized for 40 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, approximately a week ago we celebrated Tax Freedom Day. It is interesting because this year, in 1996, it is 6 days later than we celebrated Tax Freedom Day in 1993. This is the day when across America, hardworking families, moms and dads, keep their paycheck, and they have the dollars to stop funding government at all levels, and the dollars after Tax Freedom Day actually go to their families and their children and to do the things they want to do with their dollars.

Americans do not need to look any further than their 1995 tax return to see the difference between Republicans and Democrats. Republicans want Americans to keep more of their paychecks. Republicans want families to save for their futures, and they want more for the families and for our communities across this Nation.

We kept our promises to the American taxpayers by passing the first ever balanced budget in 25 years. We passed the \$500-per-child tax credit and the repeal of Clinton's assault on working seniors. We want seniors to keep more of what they earn.

But unfortunately President Clinton chose to veto these key provisions which were meant to put back power to where power belongs, and that is into the hands of working taxpayers, the working families, moms and dads across this Nation.

It is interesting because Washington values here on Capitol Hill are so very much different from the folks across America, and in particular the folks on the central coast of California. I am very privileged to have the right to be voted in by constituents on the central coast of California, to represent them. I represent two wonderful counties, San Luis Obispo County and Santa Barbara County.

It is interesting to note, because in 1993 we had a severe gas tax hike. It was part of the largest tax hike in history. In fact, \$4.8 billion alone went to an annual gas tax, and I want to remind everyone that that is 30 percent to the Federal gas tax, a 30-percent increase. I might also remind people that not one Republican voted for the gas tax. It was part of an overall tax increase of \$268 billion, an entire package. But again, as I said, \$4.8 billion was the gas tax.

When politicians raise taxes for some reason they do not seem to save the money. They spend it. People on Capitol Hill here in Washington, DC, when they can get a dollar here, a dollar there, eventually they spend it. Spending in 1992 was \$1.3 trillion, almost \$1.4 trillion. But spending in 1995 was \$1.57 trillion, almost \$1.6 trillion, an increase of \$190 billion.

I know I cannot fathom what \$1 billion is. It is very hard to work in these numbers. I can identify with working families on the central coast of California. We deal not in those type of numbers. Only in government do we deal in billions and trillions.

But I know that the gas tax hits the low- and middle-income Americans the most, those that need a helping hand from those of us that are trying to help them here in Washington. I want to help those people, because I know it hits them, those that we always say we care the most about.

Perhaps you have seen that famous quote of President Clinton. It was stated in Houston in October of last year, and he was talking about raising \$268 billion of tax increase, and he admitted, "Even I think I raised taxes too much."

I agree, and I think we here in Washington, DC, here in this House and this Senate, and we should have the President help to roll back President Clinton's tax hikes.

We have seen definitely that there has been a gas price increase and it has been caused by market-driven events, many reasons, and it really affects the central coast of California. In fact in Santa Barbara alone, the city of Santa Barbara, we saw perhaps the highest prices in Santa Barbara than were seen across this Nation, in some instances over \$2 a gallon.

So we wonder, why are the retail prices up? I have a response here from the Department of Energy. On April 30, 1996, the Department of Energy told Senate staff that the recent increases in retail gasoline and diesel prices are

due to many reasons, and here are some of the factors:

First, tight world crude supplies following a colder than normal winter.

Second, lower U.S. private crude and petroleum stocks due to, well, a colder than normal winter. Market decisions by companies to hold minimal inventories of crude oil in anticipation of the United Nations agreeing to allow Iraq to begin exporting oil.

Third, higher corn prices than have reduced ethanol production.

Fourth, normal spring refinery cutbacks while they reconfigure to decrease heating oil production and increase gasoline production for the summer driving season.

And, finally, fifth, in California, my State, particular shortages because of California's required introduction of a particular form of reformulated gasoline. The shortages were due to production run problems at several California refineries.

It is interesting, just recently in the Washington Post one of the reporters said today's prices are set by the absence of refining capacity and unnecessary environmental regulations, and that really does apply to California. We are all interested in cleaner air, but there is a price to be paid.

Overall, retail prices of motor fuels in the United States have increased sharply since the winter to their highest level since 1990. Especially in California, we are preparing for the tourist season. Tourism is very important to the central coast of California and so we are preparing for that busiest season and concerned about whether the folks are going to come.

But with gas prices soaring all over the country and especially, as I said, in my own backyard, I want to do something to help ease the burden of those rising gas prices. I think we need some relief and some immediate relief.

I have introduced a bill that would temporarily repeal the Clinton gas tax until 1997 to allow the oil markets a chance to recover from a shortage in supply. The bill is H.R. 3415.

Again, the central coast of California, every time I go home, and that is every weekend, folks will tell me that they just are overtaxed. They need some relief from the paperwork and the burdens of regulation, from all levels of government, and they wholeheartedly agree that immediately they would like to see saving some of that 4.3 cents that we pay because of the Clinton tax hike. They would like to put that in their pocket. They think it would relieve California and the central coast gas pains. It is amazing the good support I am getting on the central coast of California, and I think this is typical across this Nation.

But it is interesting because we hear a lot of naysayers on Capitol Hill here in Washington, DC. They say, the attitude is, why do we have to reduce the taxes? They just do not get it. They just do not understand the needs of working folks across this Nation and especially the folks in California.